



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
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CAREX AMPLIFOLIA **BIG-LEAF SEDGE**

Big-leaf Sedge is a grass-like perennial with a single or several sharply triangular stems, 50-100 cm tall, that arise from creeping rhizomes. The flat leaves are 8-20 mm wide, up to 50 cm long, and distributed evenly along the stem. Foliage is glabrous. Flowers are clustered in cylindrical spikes, 4-10 cm long. A single spike of male flowers occurs at the tip with several female spikes on short stalks below. The glabrous perigynia are 2.5-3.5 mm long, and egg shaped with a short beak. The lance-shaped scales are slightly shorter than the perigynia which they subtend, and have a dark papery margin and a green or pale midvein, often with a pointed tip. Each perigynium has 3 stigmas and a 3 sided achene. Fruits mature in July-August.

The leaves of *CAREX AMPLIFOLIA* are much broader than either *C. LASIOCARPA* or *C. LANUGINOSA*. It could be confused with *C. UTRICULATA*, but the perigynia of the latter are 4-7 mm long. A hand lens and technical key are needed for positive identification.